



What's going on this week?

This week, 10 and 11 year olds all over the country will be taking part in SATs testing, but not without some disagreement from a group of MPs. Testing for young children should be made less 'high stakes' because it damages teacher and pupil wellbeing, the group have said. The education select committee said primary school SATs may be putting too much pressure on pupils and causing them 'unnecessary stress'. The group also said the assessments can lead to schools 'teaching to the test' and neglecting the rest of the curriculum.

Main question: How important is testing?

Listen, think, share

Talk about the image on the poster, ask the children what they think it might be about? Explain that children and parents are protesting against SATs. Ask the children who has recently completed a test, what was it for? List the types of test the children may have taken. Ask the children to suggest tests that we may have done. Were the tests worthwhile and what did we benefit from through taking them? Talk about how some tests may be more useful than others.

Look at each of the people from the assembly resource and talk about the types of testing they may take to reach their goals. Talk about the difference in types of testing we may have; things like physical tests or even health tests. Talk about athletes and people who win medals – what kind of testing do they go through to achieve their goals? Ask children to think of examples from themselves or people that they know that may have gone through tests to reach a goal – can they share their stories? Discuss how people feel before, during and after tests. Ask children to suggest possible ways they might cope with pressure, talk about use of music, talking, playing with friends. Discuss how relaxation techniques may help with stresses felt before testing.

Reflection

All of us will go through life being tested at various times. If we understand some of the reasons why we have tests, it can help us to look at the bigger picture and help us learn strategies to manage them.

This week...

We will think about the many types of tests we will encounter as we grow up, think about what's most important, how we can prepare and how we can keep calm and know that trying our best is always good enough!



KS1 Focus

Question: What types of test will we take as we grow up?

Listen, think, share

Ask the children if they have ever taken a test for something. This could be at school, as part of a sport or afterschool club or even for playing an instrument. Ask the children when they think they will stop taking tests, when they leave school? Explain that we are often tested in many ways over the course of our whole lives and there are lots of types of tests that we take that might not involve writing!

Ask the children if they can think of any other examples of tests we will take as we grow up.

Look at the KS1 resource and talk through each of the examples provided. Talk about when we take these tests and what the test might involve. Ask the children to imagine how it might feel before they take the test and make a list of all the feelings the children provide. Then talk about them afterwards – imagine passing your driving test, how that would feel! Make a list of these feelings and talk about how, often to achieve something, it will involve preparation but to reach our goals – it will be worth it!

Reflection

As we grow up we will learn lots of new and exciting things. Some experiences we will have to work hard at and will involve a test or someone making sure we are able to do something. This helps us move forward and helps us make progress in our lives. It is very important to remember if you give 100%, there is nothing to worry about!

This week...

We will talk to an adult about our experiences of being tested – do we have any helpful advice that we can use as we get older? We will share any advice with our friends and remember the tips for when we go through tests.



KS2 Focus

Question: What are the advantages and disadvantages of tests and what's the best way to handle them?

Listen, think, share

Discuss the variety of tests the children may have taken so far and then talk through how the children felt before and during the tests.

Explain that, in certain situations, in order to progress or get better, tests can be helpful. Ask the children to share things that they have achieved that they are proud of or things that they may be particularly good at. Discuss which of these things involved tests? Explain that some things we do will involve elements of being judged or assessed and one of the most important things is to keep calm and try our best – no one can ask for anything else! Start to make a list of the pros and cons of testing from our own experiences and that of people around us. Consider things like: driving tests, musical exams, university degrees.

Look at the KS2 resource, reading through each of the different opinions on testing – can we add any of these to our lists? Discuss testing and talk about when it is important and when, if there are any times, we feel it may be unnecessary.

Reflection

Over the course of our lives, we will encounter many different situations where we may be tested or need to show what we can do, to either help us improve or progress. At times, these situations may feel very stressful. It's important to remember that we are not alone and there are always people to talk to who have been there before!

This week...

If we know someone has an important test coming up – we will be sure to be there to support them in any way we can!



KS2 Cross-Curricular Ideas

English: Create a 'Surviving Tests Guide'. Ask the children to think about including sections about how to cope with feeling worried/stressed, techniques used in tests, top tips etc. This is a great opportunity for children to use organisational and presentational devices. You could keep the leaflets and bring them back out when the children next have a test.

Maths: Use the link in the useful websites section to search for SATs results from last year either from your own school or another. It will bring up lots of tables and charts for you to discuss and read with the children. Ask them to compare the data and ask and record their own questions.

Music: Some people find music is a very powerful tool in helping us to overcome things or to feel a certain way. Ask the children to think about what music they might listen to if they went for a run, were chilling in their room, when they feel sad. Play the children a variety of different music and ask them to jot down how each one makes them feel. Ask the children which piece of music would be good to listen to before taking a test. Does it help relax, focus, motivate?

DT: Ask the children to research products that are used to help people relieve stress: stress balls, fidget spinners, online stress games. Design their own product. If you are brave enough, make them!!

Geography: Ask the children to compare the education system in Finland, China and the UK. You could ask the children to research key facts using ICT. Give a list of questions such as: What age do children start school? What time does school start/finish? What subjects/lessons do children do? What tests do children take?



KS1 Cross-Curricular Ideas

English: Explain that in order to drive a car safely on the road, you have to pass a test. Ask the children to imagine they had to take a test to ride their scooter on a pavement. What things might you be required to do? Ask them to pretend they are the examiner and to record a list of criteria they should be looking for if they were testing somebody e.g. helmet is on properly, two hands on the handle bars at all times, not travelling too fast, dismounting to cross the road. You could even take the tests on the playground!

Maths: Give the children a number bonds test on paper. Ask them to complete the test. How did they feel? Did they learn anything? Show the children the number bonds game (see online resources). If possible, get the children to play the game online independently. Discuss which test they preferred. Did either of them help them learn?

Roleplay: Set up a scooter testing centre. You could give the children helmets and high-vis jackets, a set of rules and road signs for them to learn. Even add scooters to it!

MFL: Using your school MFL learn words associated with the scooter road safety theme such as: scooter, stop, helmet, ride etc.

Art: Discuss how the children felt before they took their test in maths. Some of them may have been excited/happy others may have felt worried/nervous. Think about the colours and shapes associated with these feelings. Ask the children to create a picture using shapes and colours to show how they feel before taking a test.



This Week's Useful Websites

This week's news story
<http://ind.pn/2p8rHrE>

Top tips for dealing with exam stress
<http://bit.ly/2p8o6Kk>

KS2 Maths
www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/

KS1 Maths – number bonds
www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button



This Week's Useful Videos

Year 6 talk about their feelings towards SATS
<http://bit.ly/2qyelWW>